

“The Government in a Plastic Bubble”

January 20, 2022

Dear Council Members,

I'm a lifelong Montgomery County resident and am grateful for the opportunity to grow up in a place with great schools and parks, etc. I've never been fully aligned with the political philosophy of the county government; however, I've always tolerated it because of the quality of life that I experienced. As a result of the response to the pandemic by the County Executive and County Council (Board of Health) I can no longer tolerate it.

I'll refrain from recycling the common theme of the public testimony stating that the vaccine doesn't stop the spread, that you are ignoring natural immunity, and that this proposal places unnecessary burdens on local businesses that are already struggling due to the pandemic. Those are obvious to everyone but you. The bottom line is that this proposal is un-American to its core and goes against everything that our great country stands for.

Over the course of the past year, I have watched some of the Zoom council meetings, specifically when they involve a vote for a mask mandate or a ban on indoor dining (a council favorite). I've noticed that several of the council members occasionally relate their personal experiences during the pandemic, such as avoiding indoor dining, avoiding travel, only socializing with vaccinated/masked people, attending in-person meetings that are mandatory vaccine, vaccinating their 5-year-old kids, etc. After watching all of this it reminded me of a movie that was popular when I was a young kid, “The Boy in the Plastic Bubble.” The County Executive, Council, and health officers live in a plastic bubble, and as a result, they are forcing the 1,000,000 county residents to do the same!

Since the summer of 2020, our family has safely traveled all over the country. Of course, we have exercised our own judgement, taken precautions, and made fact-based decisions on where we go and what we do. People don't need or want the government to dictate to them what they can and can't do. Common sense tells us that we should protect the vulnerable, urge them to get vaccinated if they wish, and encourage everyone else to exercise caution, not mandate vaccines to those who are low risk, and not propose senseless vaccine passport mandates that will result in closed businesses and increased unemployment.

During the 1/18/22 meeting Earl Stoddard revealed the real reason for the vaccine passport proposal when he said, “that's why we chose to include 5-to 11-year-olds because that is an area where we need to see an increased uptake of the vaccine. That was a choice that was made to try and encourage vaccinations on that population specifically.” This is extremely disturbing, to hear the county's Chief Administrative Officer attempt to mandate an emergency use only vaccine for 5–11-year-old children and take that decision away from their parents and doctors. This is child abuse.

During the same meeting, James Bridgers said “we still have about 14.5 percent of the population that NEED to be vaccinated.” Again, completely ignoring those with natural immunity and other personal, religious, or medical reasons for declining the vaccine.

The County Executive, Council, and health officers continue to have no regard for how their decisions will affect their constituents and continue to allow the cure to be worse than the disease. They only follow the science when the science fits their narrative.

Since the County Executive, Council, and health officers continue to live in their own bubble they are probably unaware that much of the country has moved on and figured out a way to live with this endemic virus that isn’t going away anytime soon. After two years it’s time that they figure it out.

Also, why do you continue to meet virtually, when I’m sure all of you are double or triple vaccinated? When do you plan to resume in person meetings? Is it because you don’t want to face your constituents in person? County residents deserve the opportunity to testify in person instead of the 10-person, two-minute limit process now in place. I see that Nancy Navarro is running for Lieutenant Governor. How is it possible to campaign for this when she can’t manage to attend in-person meetings?

Please continue to live in your plastic bubbles if you wish; however, the rest of the county residents need to move forward. Leave us alone.

Sincerely,

Joe Bowers